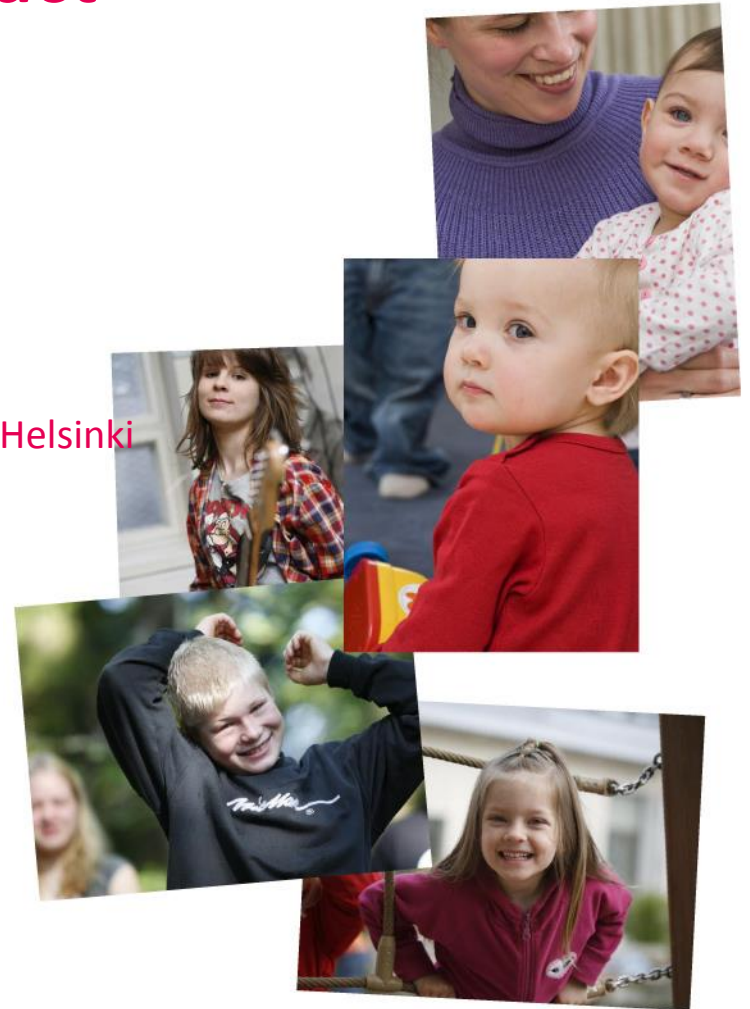


Linking evidence for investing in early years with social impact measurement

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THE MANNERHEIM LEAGUE
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- Risk, protection and resilience
- What promotes resilience?
- Linking evidence with measurement in practice



A systemic view on risk and protective factors in child development

- ***Dynamic*** factors are changeable, for example behaviour, relationships
- ***Static*** factors are unchangeable: such as ethnicity
- Proximal and distal factors
- Major ecological theories (such as Bronfenbrenner) are used both in risk and resilience research

Definitions

Risk: a (characteristic), relationship, trait, behavior, event or circumstance that increases the probability for a certain unfavorable outcome.

A protective factor: a (characteristic), relationship, trait, behavior, event or circumstance that *decreases* the probability for a certain outcome in the presence of risk.

Thus, the presence of one or several protective factors can make the child more resilient against risk factors, i.e., can make it possible for the individual to develop well despite the presence of risks.

Not about causality, only about decreasing/increasing risks

Resilience

- Positive adaptation in the context of childhood adversities
- Positive adaptation? – *“substantially better than what would be expected given the exposure to the risk circumstance being studied”* (Luthar et Zelazo 2003)
- Developmentally appropriate, for example school success for a school-aged child
- To “bounce back and to bounce forward”

What promotes resilience?

Child-centered resources: for example, perceived competence in solving problems; positive and differentiated future expectations; affective competence and prosocial skills

Family-centered: reducing family/parental stress, promoting parenting skills and promoting emotionally responsive parenting practices; promoting supportive networks and social support

*As early as possible (pregnancy, first-time parents)
or when child displays conduct problems*

Promoting resilience

High quality pre-school, day-care, primary school

Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I. and Taggart, B. (Eds) (2010), Early Childhood Matters: Evidence from the Effective Pre-school and Primary Education project. London: Routledge

Chicago Longitudinal Study on Child-parent center programme:

Reynolds A J, Temple J A, Robertson D L, Mann E A (2001) Long-term Effects of an Early Childhood Intervention on Educational Achievement and Juvenile Arrest. A 15-Year Follow-up of Low-Income Children in Public Schools. JAMA 285:2339-2346.

Is preventive work cost-effective?

The Nobel Prize winner James Heckman's work is devoted to the development of a scientific basis for economic policy evaluation. His career has included developing models to study unemployment, wage growth and skill formation. Heckman's work describes how individual productivity can be fostered by investments in young children.

Heckman, James: Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing in Disadvantaged Children. Science (2006):312, 1900–1902

Economics of interventions

- Investments in early years – returns 6 times the investment
- Investment in supporting parenting – 8 times
- School-based intervention to reduce bullying – 14 times
- School-based intervention to prevent conduct disorder - 84 times

Campion J et al: European Psychiatric Association (EPA) guidance on prevention of mental Disorders. European Psychiatry 27 (2012) 68–80

Social impact measurements

Positive social impact on both individuals and society (promoting social capital, such as trust, and more resilient societies)

Social capital is related to improved mental health, lower criminality, and a longer life.

Campion J et al European Psychiatric Association (EPA) guidance on prevention of mental Disorders European Psychiatry 27 (2012) 68–80

Challenging: measuring impact of voluntary, low-threshold service

- **Impact of the Help-line for children? – anonymous call, lack of feedback, yet the first step to get help for more than 30 000 contacts every year**
- **Impact of family-café service: no collection of baseline data or outcome, but we know who uses the open groups, and how they think it helps them by user-questionnaires**

Impact of the family-café service



promotes mental wellbeing

More playmates for my child

More friends

Social impact

Impact from the point of view of the clients	Impact from the point of view of the volunteers
88,7 % My children got company and playmates	88,3%
81 % Being here promotes my mental wellbeing	83,1%
80,6 % I have got more friends	94,1 %
61,4 % I have got information of service and events in the area where I live	
55 %The children's social competence have improved.	67,5%
34,1 % I have got support and new ideas in solving every-day problems, and in bringing up my children	53,4 %
	72,5 % I have been able to help others

“In order to know how a pear tastes, you need to change the pear by tasting it...”

The paradox: if you want to know the impact (social or economic) of low-threshold service, you need to change the service by applying some kind of assessments (at a minimum a before/after questionnaire) (and we would still have difficulties with assessing alternative attribution, deadweight, displacement and effects declining over time)

However, if you do that, it is not the same low-threshold anonymous service anymore

Thank you!

